

CASABLANCA AND EVERYTHING

Bogie smoked 4 packs of cigarettes
a day
and was never in a good movie.

he only made them good by being
in them.

some men have this invincible
presence and some
women too.

Bogie had it.

you listened when he spoke.

which is more than my women do.

all my women have told me the
same thing: "listen, I've heard
all that before."

"heard it where?"

"from you."

Bogie had the delivery, it never
varied.
sometimes I get voice changes
sometimes I sound like a
homosexual
although I don't feel like
I am.

I try my voice again and again,
I practice, I gird myself, I
put the steel edge to my vocal
inflection:

"listen, you whore, I've had it
with you!"

"Oh, go to sleep," they say, "you
bore me!"

Bogie with his 4 packs of smokes,
he had this instinctive knowledge.
his clothing sloped across his body
in a gentle smirk.

he represented the modern author-
ity of what was wrong all around,

and with the telling raise of an
eyebrow above those sucked-in
cheeks
he looked like he
knew too much

through all my shackjobs I've tried
to get like that.

I mean, we are all infected by
somebody.

think
if he had lived
what he would look like
now:

smoking a long pipe
sitting on a front porch
stoop
staring slightly off to
nowhere over say the
small rooftops
of a small town in
Arkansas

a truly terrible and
beautiful man

"this is Bogart Week on tv,"
I tell my woman.
"just think, a Bogie movie
each night for
seven nights!"

"this is trash night,"
she says, "have you
taken the trash out front
yet?"

I cup my hands
light a cigarette
inhale
look at her
while
gently exhaling smoke
from my mouth and my
nose:

"you take it."